

# BRILLIANT SUN

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MORAL GEMS IN THE QUR'AN

# RETURNING BAD WITH GOOD AND REPELLING EVIL WITH WHAT IS BEST



﴿ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ﴾

﴿Repel with what is best.﴾ (41:34)

How often do we hear people say, “If you don’t respect me I won’t respect you.” or, “Do good to me and I will do good to you.” It seems that the approach many people have, maybe even subconsciously, is that only those who do good deserve good.

Looking at this part of an important verse gives us a strong moral reminder that even though good and bad are not equal we must retaliate evil with good. We deal with an array of people, with various views and different personalities. Sometimes good comes from people, and at times bad. If we were to wait to receive good so we can return good back, and bad is always retaliated with bad, how would the world be? Our society will become so chaotic, with people at each other’s necks.

If this was the attitude we take, then what about suppressing anger and having standards of correct moral conduct and treating people correctly.

The whole verse explains how we must look at understanding good and bad, and how to deal with bad; “Good and evil [conduct] are not equal. Repel [evil] with what is best. [If you do so,] behold, he between whom and you was enmity, will be as though he were a sympathetic friend.” (41:34)

Better than retaliating bad with bad is to show grace, be good and forgive, or walk away and avoiding harming others.

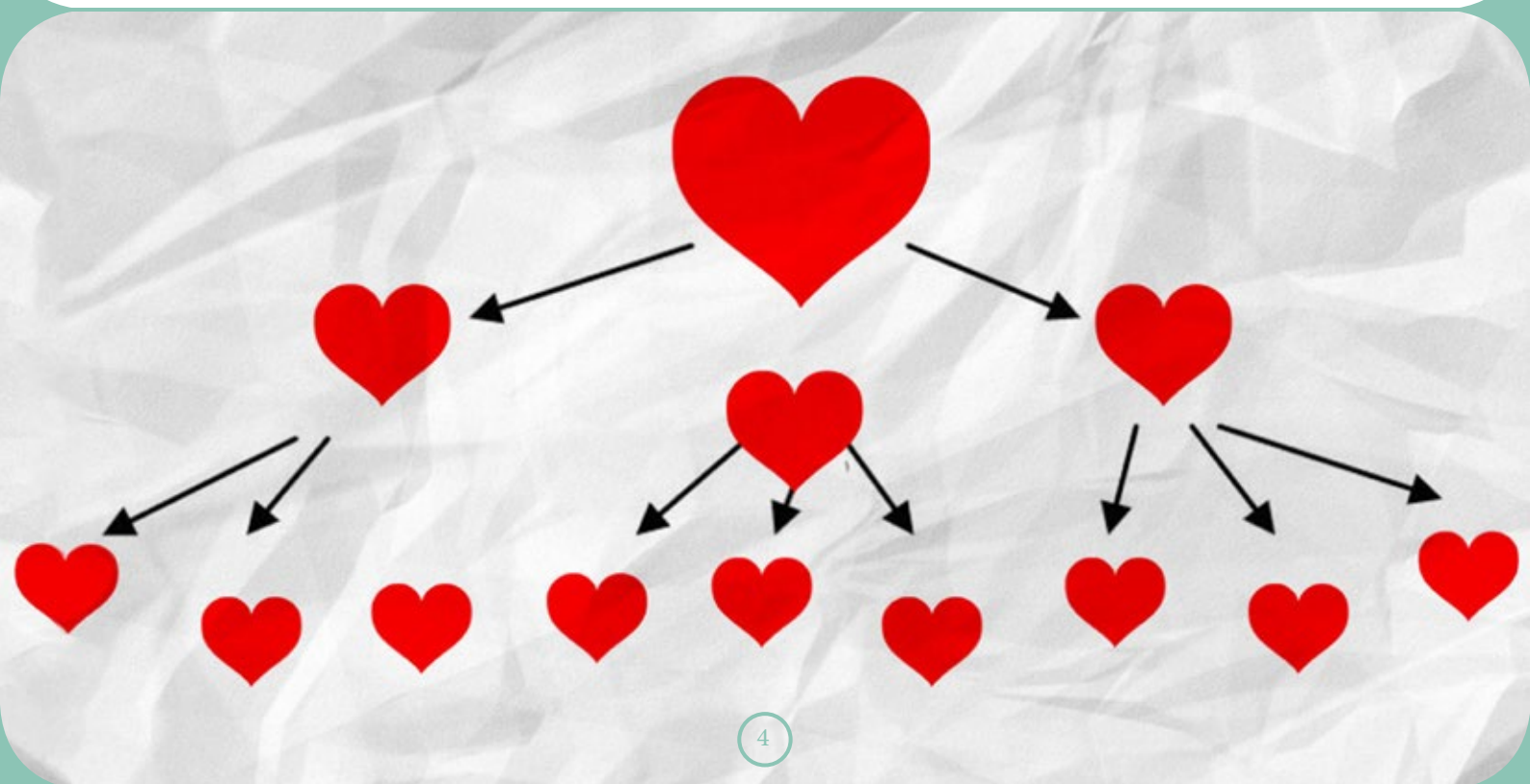
A true believer is one who preserves their best demeanour when harm comes their way. When you are aggravated, insulted or abused, your reply is to walk away and show the strength of your moral standards.

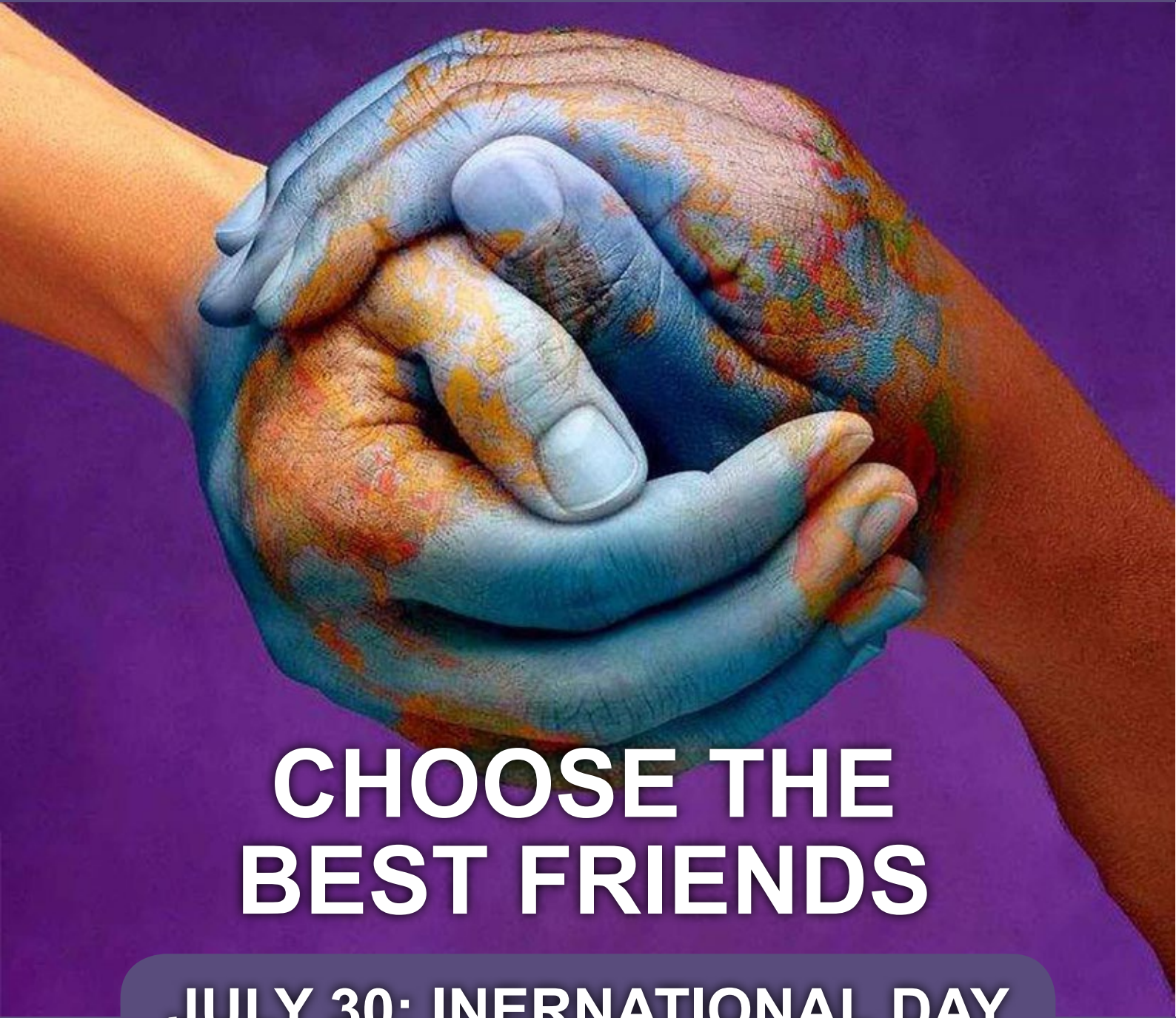
When you want to call toward your Lord you do so with patience. You repel the false with the truth, the bad with the good, the ignorance with patience, and so on.

The verse gives us the result of such an approach, and through this enmity will change to friendship and sympathy.

Just try doing this, to repel evil with good, and you will see immediate results not only in how you feel, but also in changing the mindset and attitude of others. We all respect people who even though they are wronged they still keep their positive attitude, and this is what we need to bring back to our societies.

\* By: Dr. Sh. Zaid Al-Salami





# CHOOSE THE BEST FRIENDS

**JULY 30: INTERNATIONAL DAY  
OF FRIENDSHIP**

Two points indicate the importance of choosing good friends:

1. The human's high potential to be affected by their environment, specially by friends and peers.
2. The gradual and hidden nature of this effect.

The holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) said, “First choose your friend then start your journey.”<sup>1</sup> He also said, “A believer is a mirror for his fellow believer,”<sup>2</sup> and “Everyone has the religion of his friend.”<sup>3</sup>

According to these, the important criteria of choosing friends in different stages of life are brought up and the principles of finding friends are brought forth. The stability of friendship and taking the most out of this important element in the foundation of human character depend on using these criteria. Religious texts and the findings of human sciences emphasize the following criteria:

### 1. Friendship for the Sake of Allah

Monotheism is the most fundamental element in Islamic thought and human nature has the most obvious and hidden dependency on this reality. The important characteristic of a useful friendship is its being for the sake of nearness to Allah, which can bring Divine blessing, mercy, and satisfaction.

Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) said, “Any friendship based on anything except Allah is aberration and is impossible to rely on.”<sup>4</sup> His holiness (P.B.U.H.) also said, “Divine friends have a more stable friendship, because of their motives for friendship.”<sup>5</sup>

### 2. Wisdom

Man’s life is full of new happenings. In these happenings, new problems arise. With no experience in such a matter, a person may not know how to solve this new problem. Wise friends who freely and sincerely advise us based on their intelligence, thought, and experience are the best helpers on such occasions.

Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) said, “Do not associate except with a virtuous wise person, do not mix except with a chaste sage, and do not confide your secret except to a faithful believer!”<sup>6</sup>

### 3. Loyalty

When a person is afflicted with problems and difficulties, he may find that his acquaintances slowly withdraw; in other words they do not bother themselves to help him. Such friends are friends only in the moments of success. Friendship starts with equal behavior from both sides and what spoils it is when one person is self-centered while the other is loyal.

Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) said, “I wish you the friendship of honest and sincere brothers, for they are sources of appreciation in times of blessing and means of protection in times of trouble.”<sup>7</sup>

### 4. Magnanimity

Some people are great in science, technology, art, or in other areas. But few people in addition to being great in this way are magnanimous too. Greatness is the result of mental and physical ability but magnanimity is brought about by the development of spirit and character. A magnanimous and noble-minded person sees other people’s good deeds, is hopeful, and does not tease anyone for his favors. He is a source of glory and prestige. He is patient with the wrong-doings of others. He is high-minded and joyful and is benevolent toward others. That is why the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) said, “The most fortunate person is the one who associates with the high-minded and the generous.”<sup>8,9</sup>

\* By: Hanieh Daryadel

1. Kulaynī, M., *Al-Kāfī*, Tehran: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmīyya, vol. 4, p. 286.

2. Šadūq, M., *Muṣādaqat al-Ikhwān*, Kāzimīyya: Maktab al-Imām Šāhib al-Zamān, vol. 1, p. 42.

3. Payandeh, A., *Nahj al-Faṣāḥa*, Qom: Javidan Publishing House, p. 624.

4. Mohammadi Reyshahri, M., *Mizān al-Ḥikma*, Qom: Dār al-Ḥadīth, vol. 1, p. 40.

5. Ibid., p. 47.

6. Majlisī, M., *Biḥār al-Anwār*, Beirut: Dār Ihyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, vol. 1, p. 175.

7. Ibid., vol. 74, p. 187.

8. Ibid., vol. 71, p. 185.

9. Taken from: Marviyan Husseini, M., *Techniques and Rules of Friendship*, Mashhad: Astān Quds Raḍawī, pp. 14-19.

# FRIENDSHIP IN THE WORDS OF IMAM RIDĀ (P.B.U.H.)

Humans are social creatures by nature; they're always in need of friends and companions. Most of our lives depend on interaction with others. Strong individuals are the core of a strong community, something that Muslims should always strive for. On the other hand, Islam has a comprehensive plan for all the aspects of life including friendship and has put forward the best and most comprehensive recommendations for it. The Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) had made many attempts in presenting these cultures. The International Day of Friendship provides this opportunity to take into consideration some of Imam Ridā's (P.B.U.H.) traditions regarding this social aspect of life.

- The joy of life is the size of your house and having numerous friends.<sup>1</sup>
- A believer is the brother of another believer.<sup>2</sup>
- Whoever chooses a friend in the way of Allah, it would be as if they built themselves a house in the Heaven.<sup>3</sup>

1. Utaredi Qouchani, A., *Musnad al-Imām al-Ridā (P.B.U.H.)*, Al-Mu'tamar al-'Ālamī li al-Imām al-Ridā (P.B.U.H.), vol. 2, p. 374.

2. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 257.

3. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 299.

- Companionship with bad individuals would lead to mistrust of good ones.<sup>4</sup>
- Showing affection toward people, counts for half of one's wisdom.<sup>5</sup>
- Whoever is a friend with the unwise shall always be in agony.<sup>6</sup>
- Whoever smiles at their brother in faith, Allah shall reward them and the one who is rewarded by Allah will not be chastised by Him.<sup>7,8</sup>

4. Ṣadūq, M., *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Ridā (P.B.U.H.)*, Tehran: Ṣadūq publication, vol. 2, p. 54.

5. Utaredi Qouchani, A., *Musnad al-Imām al-Ridā (P.B.U.H.)*, Al-Mu'tamar al-'Ālamī li al-Imām al-Ridā (P.B.U.H.), vol. 1, p. 285.

6. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 302.

7. Ṣadūq, M., *Muṣādaqat al-Ikhwān*, Kāzīmīyya: Maktab al-Imām Ṣāhib al-Zamān, p. 24.

8. Taken from: Jahan-Bakhsh, M., *God sent the friend: friendship in the words of Imam Ridā (P.B.U.H.)*, Mashhad: Institute for Youth Counseling Services and Social Research Publication House.

# WHO ARE MY FRIENDS?

**Question:** Living in a non-Muslim country I often feel isolated and lonely. On the one hand, I am worried that if I make friends and join in a group with non-Muslims, I am betraying myself and my religion. Many of the things they like to do, or the places they like to gather, make me feel uncomfortable. On the other hand, I haven't met any fellow Muslims here and don't like being alone with no friends. Is it okay to make friends with non-Muslims?

**Answer:** Dear reader, thank you for asking this important question. Certainly no one likes being a stranger in a strange land. In fact, research has shown that people who have a social network tend to live longer, be healthier and be happier. I can understand your concern, however, about feeling uncomfortable making friends with people who do not share your religion and lifestyle. Here are some tips that might help.

1. To expand your social outlook, look for people who have much in common with you. Muslims share much in common with people of other religions and lifestyles. For example, we all share an interest in helping the poor and deprived, in being kind to orphans, and in caring for the elderly. Try joining a group of others who are involved in such activities. Search the internet or social media to find such groups in your area and get involved. Not only will some of your social needs be met, but you will gather blessings as well by doing these good deeds. If the people you

meet in these groups suggest casual gathering in other venues, figure out where they will be going and what the plans are before deciding to go or not. Don't be afraid to opt out of places where you might be uncomfortable, or which are not suitable for Muslims.

2. To serve your needs for friendship, seek out Muslims in your city. Find the mosque and see if there are groups that gather outside prayer times for picnics, play dates for children, nature outings, and other wholesome activities. If these groups don't exist, then consider being proactive and forming a group. Put out a call in the mosque's newsletter, bulletin board, or social media. Suggest meeting informally with others to discuss programs that can lead to friendships and support for your Islamic lifestyle. In the words of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), "Looking upon the face of Muslim brethren with kindness and compassion is in itself a form of worship."<sup>1</sup> In this sense, being friends with other Muslims brings special blessings and turns your moments of friendship into worship.

\* Do you have a question you would like to be answered? We will not be able to answer every question but will choose the most commonly asked ones for a response.

\* By: Dr. Z. D'Elia

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1. Harrānī, Ḥ., *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, Qom: Jāmi'a Mudarrisīn Publication, p. 282.



ISLAMIC BELIEFS

# WILL THOSE SENT TO HELL ENTER PARADISE?

## The Released Butterflies

The Hell Fire is a filter that separates impurities from the pure as the melting furnace separates gold and stone from each other. So, the person condemned to Hell will come out of it by intercession or by finishing the conviction period. This is because they did not destroy their Divine nature by sin completely and they did not have a tendency to sin forever.

In this respect, Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) said, “The sinners among monotheist people will enter the Fire, but they come out of it by intercession.”<sup>1</sup> Also, Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) said, “In the Hell Fire, the polytheists and unbelievers will say to the monotheist sinner, ‘Did you realize that we and you are equal and monotheism did not have any benefit to you?’ In response to this objection the Lord will tell the angels and the believers to intercede, so that all decent people will come out of Paradise like butterflies by intercession.”<sup>2</sup>

That is only a drop of the boundless ocean of Allah’s Mercy! As the Apostle of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) said, “Verily, there are one hundred mercies belonging to Allah, from which, He has sent down to the earth only one and distributed that one among His creatures. All the mercy and affection they have, issue from it. He, the Merciful, withheld the other 99 for Himself to show mercy upon His servants on the Day of Resurrection.”<sup>3</sup>

Of course, it is reasonable to escape from the Hell Fire in this world by compensation and repentance as Allah the Exalted said, “O’ My servants who have committed excesses against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed Allah will forgive all sins. Indeed He is the All-forgiving, the All-merciful.” (39:53) We should be grateful to Allah and seek His refuge, particularly in the month of Ramadan and the eves of Friday, to save us from the Fire of Hell.

In short, “There are three groups of people on the Resurrection; [righteous] those who will be under the shelter of Allah’s throne in a day when there is no shelter, those who have the account and punishment [and after suffering, enter Paradise], and those whose faces are

like human beings, but their hearts are like Devils [who will dwell in Hell for ever],”<sup>4</sup> such as the faithless (2:39), the apostates (2:217), the polytheists (98:6), the killers of believers (4:93), the deniers of the Resurrection (13:5) the arrogant (16:29), the enemies of Allah (41:28), the guilty (43:74), the Satan and his followers (59:16-17), the oppressors (10:52), the adulterers (25:68-69), and so on. This is because they intended to commit sin forever, if they were alive in the world.<sup>5</sup>

### How to Escape from Hell?

There are more than 50 ways in which one can save himself from the Hell Fire such as, faith, love of Allah, piety, repentance, worshiping, the struggle for Allah, pilgrimage to Mecca, saying the prayer, saying the Friday Prayer, fasting, reciting the holy Qur’an, *Ṣalawāt* [sending salutations upon the Prophet and his progeny (P.B.U.T)], guardianship of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (P.B.U.T.), visiting the graves of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (P.B.U.T.) specially Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), affection to the family and brothers in faith, respecting guests, good morals, self-control, forgiving others, avoiding lust, almsgiving, giving charity, preserving the honor of the believers, avoiding backbiting, helping people, and reciting Al-Jawshan al-Kabīr Prayer, in which for one hundred times we say, “You are exalted, there is no god except You. Help us! Help us! Relieve us from the fires of Hell! O’ Lord!”<sup>6</sup>

\* By: Mohammad Javad Norouzi

1. Majlisī, M., *Biḥār al-Anwār*, Beirut: Dār Ihya’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, vol. 8, p. 362.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., vol. 6, p. 219.

4. Ibid., vol. 7, p. 183.

5. Ṣadūq, M., *Al-Tawhīd*, Qom: Jāmi‘a Mudarrisīn, p. 398.

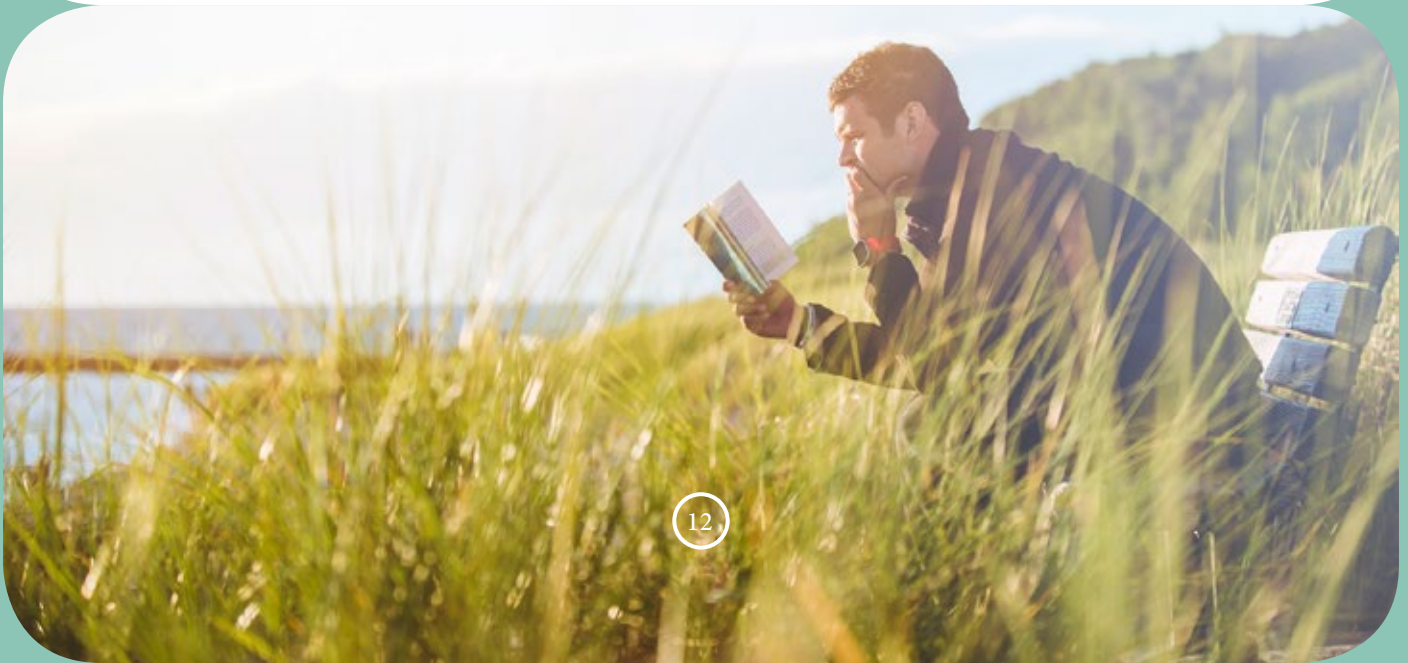
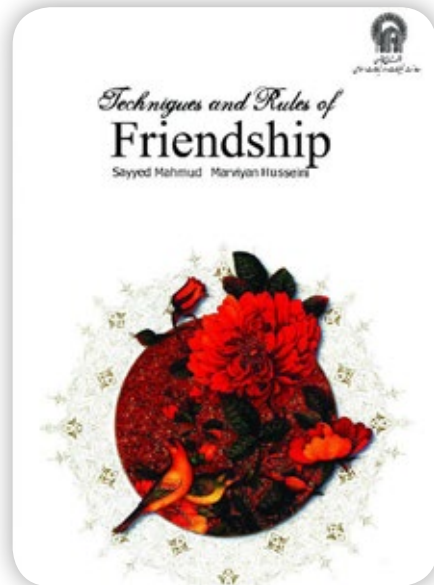
6. Mohammadi Reyshahri, M., *Biḥisht wa Dūzakh az Nigāh-i Qur’ān (Paradise and Hell from the viewpoint of the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth)*, Qom: Dār al-Ḥadīth, vol. 2, pp. 433-517.

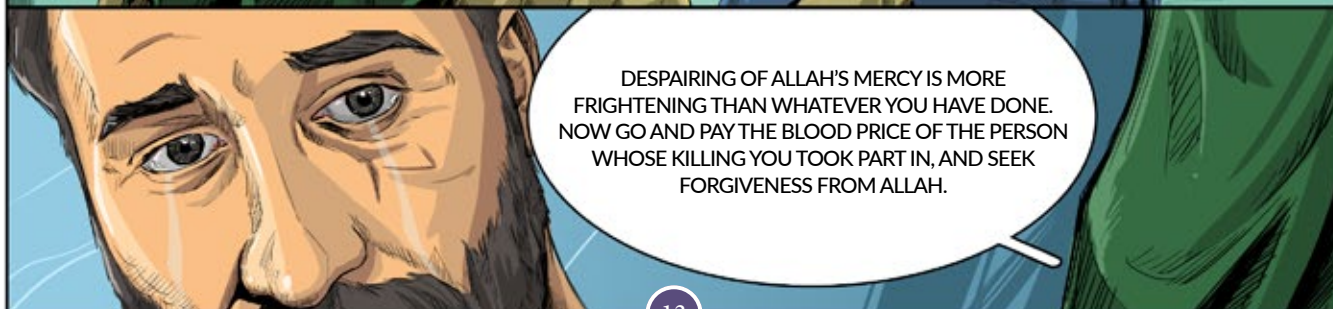


READ ONE BOOK PER WEEK

# TECHNIQUES AND RULES OF FRIENDSHIP

*Techniques and Rules of Friendship* is a practical book that provides a logical understanding of friendship written by Sayyed Mahmud Marviyan Husseini. Using simple language, the author presents the importance, the results, and the limits of friendship as well as the bilateral duties of friends, based on religious teachings. He also shows the techniques and rules of friendship in Islam.





O' ALLAH! I ASK YOU...

## MAKE US ONE OF THY SPECIAL FRIENDS

يَا مَنْ لَا تَفْنَى خَزَائِنُ رَحْمَتِهِ، صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ، وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا نَصِيبًا فِي رَحْمَتِكَ؛ وَ يَا مَنْ  
تَنْقَطِعُ دُونَ رُؤْيَيْهِ الْأَبْصَارُ، صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ، وَ أَذِنَا إِلَى قُرْبِكَ؛

O' He the treasures of whose mercy will never be exhausted! Bless Muḥammad and his household and appoint for us a portion of Thy mercy! O' He whom eyes fall short of seeing! Bless Muḥammad and his household and bring us close to Thy nearness!

اللَّهُمَّ أَغْنِنَا عَنْ هَيْبَةِ الْوَهَّابِينَ بِهَيْبَتِكَ، وَ اكْفِنَا وَخْشَةَ الْفَاطِعِينَ بِصَلَاتِكَ حَتَّى لَا نَرْغَبَ إِلَى أَحَدٍ مَعَكَ بِذَلِكَ، وَ لَا نَسْتَوْجِشَ  
مِنْ أَحَدٍ مَعَكَ فَضْلَكَ.

O' Allah, through Thy gift, remove our need for the gifts of the givers, spare us the loneliness of those who break off through Thy joining, that we may beseech no one along with Thy free giving, that we may feel lonely at no one's absence along with Thy bounty!

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّمَا يَكْتَفِي الْمُكْتَفُونَ بِفَضْلِ قُوَّتِكَ، فَصَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَ اكْفِنَا، وَ إِنَّمَا يُعْطَى الْمُعْطُونَ مِنْ فَضْلِ جَدَّتِكَ،  
فَصَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَ أَغْنِنَا، وَ إِنَّمَا يَهْتَدَى الْمُهْتَدُونَ بِنُورِ وَجْهِكَ، فَصَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَ أَهْدِنَا.

O' Allah, the spared are spared only through the bounty of Thy strength, so bless Muḥammad and his household and spare us! The givers give only through the bounty of Thy wealth, so bless Muḥammad and his household and give to us! The guided are guided only by the light of Thy face, so bless Muḥammad and his household and guide us!

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ، وَ اجْعَلْ سَلَامَةَ قُلُوبِنَا فِي ذِكْرِ عَظَمَتِكَ، وَ فَرَاغَ أَبْدَانِنَا فِي شُكْرِ نِعْمَتِكَ، وَ انْطِلَاقَ أَلْسِنَتِنَا فِي  
وَصْفِ مَنَّتِكَ.

O' Allah, bless Muḥammad and his household and put the soundness of our hearts into the remembrance of Thy mightiness, the idleness of our bodies into giving thanks for Thy favor, and the flow of our tongues into the description of Thy kindness!

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ، وَ اجْعَلْنَا مِنْ دُعَايِكَ الدَّاعِينَ إِلَيْكَ، وَ هُدَايِكَ الدَّالِّينَ عَلَيْكَ، وَ مِنْ خَاصَّتِكَ الْخَاصِّينَ لَدَيْكَ، يَا  
أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ.

O' Allah, bless Muḥammad and his household and make us one of Thy summoners who summon to Thee, Thy guiders who direct to Thee, and Thy special friends whom Thou hast singled out!  
O' most Merciful of the merciful!

1. Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), William C. Chittick trans., *The Psalms of Islam (Al-Shāhīfa al-Sajjādiyya)*: Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) supplication for himself and his special friends, Supplication 5.